

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action dated August 12, 2005, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on November 12, 2005. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-7 and 25-31 remain pending in the application and are shown above. Claims 1-7 and 25-31 are rejected. Claim 31 has been canceled. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested for reasons presented below.

Independent claim 31 has been rewritten in independent form and presented as new claim 32. Applicants submit that the changes made herein do not introduce new matter.

Claims 1-7 and 25-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over *Bajaj et al.* Claim 31 has been canceled. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Examiner states that *Bajaj et al.* appears to disclose all the elements of claim 1, including polishing with an abrasive free article and polishing with a fixed abrasive article. The Examiner states that the material being removed by the abrasive free article in *Bajaj et al.* includes bulk material as clearly taught in the reference. However, the Examiner avoids asserting that the reference removes a bulk dielectric material filling features in a patterned dielectric layer. The reference uses bulk conductive material to fill the features therefore the reference cannot be used to assert teaching or suggestion of the removal of a bulk dielectric material. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested and the Applicants respectfully request the allowance of claims 1-7 and 25-30.

New claim 32 has been added. Applicants believe claim 32 is fully supported by the specification and no new matter has been entered. The reference fails to teach, show, or suggest removing residual bulk dielectric material to expose the patterned dielectric material between the feature definitions, wherein the bulk dielectric material comprises silicon oxide and the patterned dielectric material comprises silicon nitride as

recited in Applicant's claim 32. Thus Applicants respectfully request that claim 32 be allowed.

In conclusion, the references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach, show, or suggest the invention as claimed.

Having addressed all issues set out in the Final Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



Keith M. Tackett
Registration No. 32,008
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicant(s)